

3
CHICAGO, ILL.
TRIBUNE

M-840,746
S 1,178,515

REB 25 1967

REPORT FROM WASHINGTON

By Walter Trohan

CHIEF OF CHICAGO TRIBUNE'S WASHINGTON BUREAU

Thomas Gives
Ignorance as
His Excuse for
Link with CIA

WASHINGTON, Feb. 24 — Norman Thomas, six times Presidential candidate of the Socialist party, has been disclosed as having accepted a million dollars from the central intelligence agency for an international and economic research organization he headed.

"I acknowledge my own stupidity," Thomas said when confronted with the fact, "it was my business to know, but I didn't."

Thomas entered a plea of ignorance, but this is no excuse for one who has achieved a considerable stature as a venerable idealist. He has been welcomed at campuses across the country as a grand old warrior for the lost cause of socialism.

Yet the country has grown more and more socialistic and this soft-spoken and kindly man of 82 years has planned it that way.

"The American people will never knowingly adopt socialism," he once said, "but under the name of liberalism they will adopt every fragment of the socialist program until one day America will be a socialist nation without knowing how it happened."

Now, Thomas stands disclosed, not as an idealistic politician, but one of the most practical political operators who will take money, like others, whatever the source. Many politicians feel that money becomes holy when they use it for what they consider noble ends, particularly their own reelection or comfort.

Financed Almost Entirely by CIA

THOMAS HEADED THE Institute for International Labor Research. The group was financed almost entirely by CIA funds, which came thru the J. M. Kaplan Fund, described in 1964 by congressional investigators as a channel for CIA funds.



Trohan

The million dollars was not exhausted until 1966. From 1964 on Thomas should have known the source of the funds, even if he had accepted the original grant blindly without evidencing any concern as to the source of his dollars.

Part of the money was used to maintain a research institution in the Dominican Republic, an institution which obviously supported the leftist Juan Bosch, who was ousted as president by a rights coup in 1963. Support of Bosch was counter to CIA policy. The CIA favored the rightists.

If the CIA is to be condemned in its operations with Thomas, it must be blamed for carelessness in throwing around money even to financing programs working against it. The same may be said of use of CIA funds to support student organizations which oppose CIA policy in Viet Nam, and the American Newspaper Guild, whose members often have been critical of CIA policies.

He's Been Behaving Like Democrat

BUT IF THE CIA is to be condemned for waste, it must be acknowledged that there is little or no example in other governmental departments which would encourage economy in the use of tax dollars. Also, those who took the CIA handouts should be condemned for turning up itchy palms.

In recent years Thomas has been behaving like a Democrat, so that there should not be a great surprise if he has been acting like some Democrats on money. In 1964 he voted for and campaigned for the Democratic ticket. Altho he would have preferred to campaign for a ticket headed by Hubert H. Humphrey, he said, he could accept Johnson because he considered the President's "war on poverty a socialistic approach."

Nikolai Lenin, Josef Stalin, and their successors all began as Socialists. So did Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini. All preferred their Marx straight where Thomas takes it with water, but he probably would have forgotten the dilutant if he had ever won power.